

SITE DESCRIPTION: STOKES COUNTY INVENTORY REPORT, 1997

SITE 8 NAME: Dan River Bends

SIZE: 500+ acres

SITE SIGNIFICANCE: Regional. River access, rock outcrops, plant communities, rare species and size of the area.

QUADRANGLE: Hanging Rock

LOCATION: Along the south side of highway route 89, between SR 1946 and the Dan River, 0.5 miles to the west. Including all the land included in this bend in the river and across the river to the east.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: Parts of this site are easily visible from the highway. The first part of the site is composed of two dams that form a series of lakes along a creek that parallels the road. Both lakes are very silted and show no open water. The upper most lake is covered with a mat of sedges and rushes with a mud layer at least six feet deep. The south side grades into a hillside covered with a medium age stand of mixed mesophytic hardwoods and some coves whose slopes are covered with large beech trees. The creeks in these coves support small populations (20-50 plants) of *Cardamine micranthera*, the small-anthered bittercress, a federally listed endangered species. The old lakebeds in conjunction with the adjacent hardwood slopes are good habitat for amphibians, which require wetlands and woodlands in alternate parts of their life cycle.

The forest to the south contains a tract of about 370+ acres, which includes about 6 miles of the Dan River, in some cases both sides of the river. The forests on this tract were logged about 10 years ago and are in various stages of regrowth. This site also includes bottom land and rocky steep slopes. A wide range of slope, aspect, and soils is reflected in a diverse and often dense regrowth, which supports a diversity of wildlife.

In the middle of the larger tract is a 60 acre plot that was not logged, at least not in the past 100 years. Steep and often rock slopes shelter groves of large, mature trees which include some very large trees along the base of the slope, in the floodplain. Rock outcrops extend into the river. Several uncommon plants were found during a cursory visit of the site including the northern cup plant, *Silphium perfoliatum* and the rare cliff stonecrop, *Sedum glaucophyllum*.

This site also includes a historic ford of the Dan River, an 18th century grand home site and reputed slave graveyard. This site is an important river and forest resource, in the neighborhood of several other scenic and conservation sites.

OWNERSHIP: Private

PROTECTION STATUS: None